

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 HELSIN 01389 061754Z

ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

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O 061534Z MAY 78 ZFF-4

FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2680

S E C R E T HELSINKI 1389

NODIS

DEPARTMENT PASS:

NSC - DR. BRZEZINSKI - IMMEDIATE

ACDA - AMBASSADOR WARNKE -IMMEDIATE

DOD/SECRETARY OF DEFENSE - IMMEDIATE

DOD/Joint CHIEFS OF STAFF - IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW - IMMEDIATE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM PCAT US UR

SUBJECT: US/SOVIET CAT: SUMMARY OF MAY 6IPLENARY SESSION

BEGIN SUMMARY: AT THE MAY 6 PLENARY SESSION US  
DELEGATION HEAD GELB BEGAN HIS PRESENTATION BY RESPONDING  
TO THE SOVIET PROPOSAL ON POLITICAL AND LEGAL CRITERIA.  
HE SUGGESTED THAT THE CRITERIA ADVANCED BY THE SOVIET  
SIDE WERE MEANINGFUL ONLY IN A REGIONAL CONTEXT. GELB  
ILLUSTRATED THE US VIEW DURING A LONG AND LENGTHY PRE-  
SENTATION (FULL REPORT FOLLOWS) WHICH ALSO INCLUDED  
FURTHER ELABORATION OF THE US GUIDELINES APPROACH IN-  
CORPORATING US-SOVIET CONSULTATIONS ON ARMS TRANSFER  
MATTERS. GELB ALSO DEVELOPED THE REGIONAL APPROACH,  
CITING BOTH THE HORN AND LATIN AMERICA--REGIONS OF HIGH  
AND LOW TENSIONS RESPECTIVELY--WHERE COOPERATIVE SOVIET-  
AMERICAN RESTRAINT EFFORTS WOULD FURTHER BILATERAL  
RELATIONS.

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SECRET

PAGE 02 HELSIN 01389 061754Z

THE SOVIET SIDE ASKED WHETHER, UNDER THE  
CONSULTATIONS PROPOSED BY THE US, THE SIDES WOULD HAVE  
CONSULTED FIFTEEN YEARS AGO ON US TRANSFERS TO  
ETHIOPIA OR ONE YEAR AGO ON US TRANSFERS TO  
ISRAEL OR SOVIET TRANSFERS TO SYRIA? GELB INDICATED  
THAT IF THE SIDES AGREED ON A REGION FOR CONSULTATION,  
THEN THEY WOULD HAVE TO TALK ABOUT SUCH THINGS, AT

LEAST IN GENERAL TERMS. THE SOVIETS DID NOT RESPOND TO THE REGIONAL APPROACH OTHER THAN TO INDICATE THAT THE "SEMINAR LIKE" DISCUSSION HAD BEEN A GOOD ONE AND RAISED MANY INTERESTING POINTS.

AT THE END OF THE SESSION, THE SOVIETS TABLED A FORMAL PROPOSAL WHICH HAD THE APPROVAL OF SENIOR OFFICIALS IN MOSCOW. THE PROPOSAL CALLED FOR A BILATERAL AGREEMENT TO BAN ARMS TRANSFERS WHICH WERE EXCESSIVE TO THE NORMAL SELF-DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS OF STATES BORDERING ONE ANOTHER. THIS WOULD PREVENT THE ACCUMULATION OF EXCESSIVE STOCKPILES WHICH, WHILE NOT

A DANGER TO EITHER OF US, NEVERTHELESS CREATED A PROBLEM.

THE USSR SAW THREE ADVANTAGES IN SUCH A PROPOSAL. FIRST, IT COULD BE CARRIED OUT ON A BILATERAL BASIS. SECOND, IT WOULD DAMPEN REGIONAL ARMS RACES AND ENHANCE STABILITY. THIRD, IT COULD LEAD TO REDUCTIONS IN THE SCALE OF INTERNATIONAL ARMS TRANSFERS.

THE SOVIETS MADE IT CLEAR THAT THIS PROPOSAL WAS SEPARATE FROM THE ON-GOING DISCUSSIONS. THE SOVIETS ALSO ASKED THAT THE US SIDE STUDY THE PROPOSAL CAREFULLY AND PROVIDE AN OFFICIAL RESPONSE.

AS A PRELIMINARY RESPONSE, GELB REJECTED THE PROPOSAL AS OUT OF KEEPING WITH THE SERIOUS SPIRIT  
SECRET

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PAGE 03 HELSIN 01389 061754Z

AND SUBSTANCE OF THE DISCUSSIONS UP TO THAT TIME. HOWEVER, HE SAID HE WOULD REFER IT TO HIS GOVERNMENT FOR CONSIDERATION.

ACTION RECOMMENDATION: ALL AGENCIES REPRESENTED ON THE US DELEGATION ARE AGREED THAT THE PROPOSAL IS NOT A SERIOUS ONE AND THAT IT SHOULD BE FORMALLY REJECTED. WE BELIEVE THIS CAN BE DONE WITHOUT PUTTING THE REST OF THE NEGOTIATIONS AT RISK (NOTE SOVIETS SAID THIS COULD BE KEPT SEPARATE). THIS WOULD HELP ESTABLISH THE SERIOUSNESS OF THIS ENTERPRISE. ACCORDINGLY, WE REQUEST INSTRUCTIONS BY OOB MONDAY, MAY 8TH DIRECTING US TO CONVEY A FORMAL USG REJECTION OF THE SOVIET PROPOSAL. END SUMMARY.

RIDGWAY

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Draft Date:** 06 may 1978  
**Decapton Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decapton Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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**Enclosure:** DEPART PASS: NSC-DR BRZEZINSKI, ACDA-AMB WARNKE, DOD-SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, DOD-JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
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